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Feature Focus - March 2013



Birmingham Church Takes Message of Hope Around the World

By Anna Flowers

While broadcasting church services around the world is not new to certain groups of American Christians, it is not something that has been as widely embraced by more progressive or LGBTQ-affirming congregations. For that reason, among many, we celebrate the online ministry of [Covenant Community Church](#) in Birmingham.

"This all began several years ago, when we first started using PowerPoint for the service and then a member of the church came to me with the idea of live-streaming," said Covenant's pastor, J. R. Finney II. Today the church of 260 active members, 80 percent of whom identify themselves as LGBTQ, broadcasts its Sunday and Wednesday worship services [online](#) and regularly reaches audiences in military outposts such as Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and **South Korea**. More local followers are even known to visit Covenant in person. "We have visitors from neighboring areas and states that visit from time to time," said Finney. "Also, the growth of our online giving coincided with growth of this ministry."

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Headlines from the United Church of Christ

[UCC minister offers progressive praise and worship music for download](#)

A United Church of Christ pastor in Chicago working on a liturgy of rock oriented worship music around themes of justice, peace and extravagant welcome is getting a lot of support for his project from ministerial colleagues around the denomination.



Southeast Conference FAQ's

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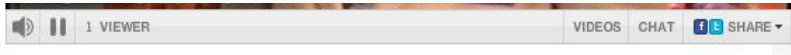
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[birmingham.org App for Ipad, Iphone, Ipod and Droid Search for Covenant Church on Itune](#)



Begun as a Metropolitan Community Church, Covenant has been an inclusive community of faith in the city of Birmingham for over 32 years. Some years ago, the congregation voted to leave the MCC and is currently in the process of affiliating with the United Church of Christ. The denomination’s Alabama-Tennessee Association will consider admitting the congregation into membership at its spring meeting, to be held in May or June.

Interested in the possibility of live-streaming your church’s worship or expanding your ministry into new outlets? Finney recommends, “Don’t be threatened by other people’s gifts around you. Find someone who is gifted with technology, set parameters as best you can, and stay out of the way.” Helpful advice! It is amazing what congregations can do when they tap into individuals’ talents and passions. Covenant Community Church has reached thousands around the world by doing exactly that. Bravo!

*For another example of UCC live-streaming ministries, check out Omaha, Nebraska’s Countryside Community Church UCC’s hugely popular webcast **Darkwood Brew** led by the Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D.*

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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